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REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON ITS SPECIAL SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: William McLENNAN (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Chapter ___.

STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL COOPERATION

(Agenda item 3)

Inter-Agency Task Force on the Measurement of Poverty

1. The report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Measurement of Poverty (E/CN.3/1994/12) was introduced by the representative of the World Bank as Convener of the Task Force.

2. The Commission discussed a wide range of issues concerning the proposed work of the Task Force. It noted the complexity of the work and the absence of international standards in the area of poverty statistics, but agreed that statistics on poverty were of considerable importance, at both the national and international levels, in analysis, policy formulation and design of programmes.

3. The Commission noted the need for better coordination of efforts for the collection and publication of statistics on poverty. The Commission considered various alternatives with a view to focusing the work of the Task Force on practical objectives on which progress could be made within one to two years.

4. The Commission welcomed the proposed participation in the work of the Task Force of all agencies involved with poverty issues, including the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Action taken by the Commission

5. The Commission requested the Task Force:

(a) To undertake a review of current practices in the measurement of poverty, with a view to determining the principal approaches, concepts, sources of data and use of poverty indicators, and the degree of data comparability;

(b) To identify international agencies engaged in work on the development of poverty data and consider how their compilation practices, analytical methodologies and dissemination might be better coordinated;

(c) To develop a plan, if possible, to make further progress in setting international standards;

(d) To report its findings and recommendations to the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination and the Commission at their forthcoming sessions, along with proposals for a further programme of work to assist countries in the measurement of poverty.